



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/572,779	03/21/2006	Hiroyuki Tanaka	Q92902	9453
23373	7590	03/25/2009	EXAMINER	
SUGHRIUE MION, PLLC			HU, HENRY S	
2100 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W.				
SUITE 800			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
WASHINGTON, DC 20037			1796	
		MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE	
		03/25/2009	PAPER	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/572,779	Applicant(s) TANAKA ET AL.
	Examiner HENRY S. HU	Art Unit 1796

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED. (35 U.S.C. § 133).

Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on Pre-Amendment of March 21, 2006.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-5 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) 1-5 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on 21 March 2006 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) _____
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3-21-2006 and 2-1-2007

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application

6) Other: _____

1. It is noted that Applicants' Pre-Amendment and two IDS (1 page each) are filed so far. This Application is a **371/PCT/JP04/13743**. Such pre-amendment is used to only eliminate improper multiple dependency. The examiner **accepts Applicants' one drawing sheet with Figures 1-2** filed on March 21, 2006 with this application (a brief description is on page 4). **Claims 1-5 with two independent claims** (Claims 1 and 5) are now pending. An action follows.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

2. Restriction is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 and 372.

This application contains the following inventions or groups of inventions, which are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1, this is based on the preliminary search done by the examiner as well as by examining the references cited in international search report and IDS filed by Applicants.

In accordance with 37 CFR 1.499, applicant is required, in reply to this action, to elect a single invention to which the claims must be restricted as following: It is noted that **two independent claims are marked with an underline**

I. **Claims 1-4, drawn to a perfluoroelastomer seal material**, wherein a rate of weight decrease is at most 1% by weight when the seal material is dried at 90°C for 5 hours,

125°C for 5 hours and 200°C for 10 hours after immersing into perfluoro(tri-n-butyl) amine at 60°C for 70 hours and taking out the same.

II. **Claim 5**, drawn to a process of making a perfluoroelastomer seal material.

Such a process comprises a step of treating with a solvent having at least 50 % of a swelling rate based on said molded article, when said molded article is immersed at 60°C for 70 hours.

3. Where the group of inventions is claimed in one and the same international application, the requirement for unity of invention referred to in Rule 13.1 shall be fulfilled only when there is a technical relationship among those inventions involving one or more of the same or corresponding special technical features. The expression "special technical features" shall mean those technical features that define a contribution which each of the claimed inventions considered as a whole, makes over the prior art. The inventions listed as Groups I-II do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, although they share the special technical feature, this special technical feature does not define a contribution over the prior art for the following reasons:

4. In view of Examiner's own prior art search, European search report for Applicants' priority document **PCT/JP2004/13743**, and the references or articles cited in two IDS' filed so far by Applicants, **Claims 1-5** is either obvious or anticipated by following: **US 5,650,472 to Tatemoto et al., US 7,309,743 B2 to Kawasaki et al., EP 1,209,175 A1 to Saito et al., US**

5,565,512 to Saito et al., US 2002/0183457 A1 to Hintzer et al., and US 2003/0125463 A1 to Tatsu et al., each individually or in combination. In summary, these two groups have no common features in the preparation as well as its application since they are structurally different. The scope of the claims, i.e., the metes and boundaries are distinct. Accordingly, the special technical feature linking the inventions, the solvent-immersed/treated seal material for each group does not provide a contribution over the prior art, and no single general inventive concept exists. Therefore the restriction is appropriate.

5. With respect to the fact that “both groups are structurally different each other”, Group I is drawn to a perfluoroelastomer-containing seal material, while Group II is drawn to a process of making a perfluoroelastomer-containing seal material. Although the subject matter from each group may comprise the same or at least similar fluoroelastomer and/or solvent, its structure, function and application are indeed different. It is noted that Group I requires using perfluoro(tri-n-butyl) amine as immersing solvent, while Group II can use any solvent as long as it has at least 50 % of a swelling rate after the molded article is immersed for 60 °C for 70 hours. The seal’s performance is thereby at least somewhat different. Groups I and II are thereby not functionally equivalent and interchangeable.

6. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above shown as different subject matters and the search required for each group is not required for other groups have

acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

7. It is noted that one phone call was made to **Abraham J. Rosner (registration # 33,276, tel: 202 293-7060)** on **August 13, 2008** to request an oral election to the above restriction requirement, but did not result in an election being made. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143).

8. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143).

9. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Conclusion

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communication from the examiner should be directed to **Dr. Henry S. Hu whose telephone number is (571) 272-1103**. The examiner can be reached on Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM –5:00 PM. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Dr. Vasu Jagannathan, can be reached on (571) 272-1119. The **fax** number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is **(571) 273-8300** for all regular communications. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/Peter D. Mulcahy/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1796

/Henry S. Hu/
Examiner, Art Unit 1796

March 19, 2009